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## Darwin's "Development" Theory applied to Music.

From the Leipzig *Signale*, of April 17, we translate the following notice of a curious book which has recently appeared in Germany.

"Musikalische Studien" (Musical Studies), by WILHELM TAPPERT. Published by Guttentag, Berlin.

The book contains six essays: "*Wandernde Melodien*" (Wandering Melodies); "*Ein Umbildungsprozess*" (A Transformation Process); "*Der übermässige Dreiklang*" (The Superfluous Trichord); "*Die alterirten Accorde*" (The Altered Accords); "*Ein Dogma*" (A Dogma); "*Zooplastik in Tönen*" (Moulding of Animals in Tones). In general, in these essays, the author places himself among the believers in the never resting, endless development of the musical art, and, by closely examining and tracing this development, seeks to raise his faith to clear conviction. This is all very well in itself; for only the most narrow intellect can maintain that there is any such thing in Art (or anywhere else) as an instantaneous, arbitrary fiat from above, and, consequently, that hairbreadth limitations and conclusions may be drawn in single phases of development, when, on the contrary, one thing stands upon the shoulders of another. But now Herr Tappert brings the Darwin theory of transformation and progression into the field and seeks to carry it over into music, by an attempt to show, that all tone-forms are derived from a few organisms, developing themselves in the long run by a natural process. That too, apparently, is not so bad; only, in our opinion, there is but little gained toward the knowledge of our Art and of its development upon the whole, when the author, in support of his Darwinian view, takes a bit of melody out of some old *Processionale*, Choral or Hymn book, popular Song, or what not, and then proceeds to find and point out again the same bit of melody in the same form, or somewhat modified ("transformed," as Herr Tappert likes to have it), in the most different compositions of succeeding times. This he does in the first two essays, where, for example, at the very beginning of the first he snatches a phrase out of a Prague *Processionale* of the 14th century and accompanies it upon its "wanderings" through the ages, faithfully reporting how and where it has settled down for some length of time, what traces of it still appear in Germany, France, Italy, &c., and how it is found made use of—to cite only one or two examples—as the beginning of Haydn's "God save the Emperor Francis," and not less as the beginning of the Coronation March in Meyerbeer's *Prophète*, (here, to be sure, considerably "transformed," or in other words, bearing only a remote resemblance).

In the second essay Herr Tappert goes still further: he takes the Tetrachord succession, c, b, a, g, and shows first in many examples its recurrence in itself, then what manifold "transformations" it has undergone (by additions, expansions, &c.), and how in this "transformed" way it meets one at every step, in ancient and modern, in

church and theatre, in the street, the parlor, everywhere. The resemblances we get, in this transformatory process, between forms often lying very far apart both as to time and purpose, are indeed often striking and also amusing; but how can it be proved whether the transformation (conscious or unconscious, it is all the same) has really occurred of itself, or whether we have not to do with Herr Tappert's own clever combination games? We might almost espouse the latter view; but then we have nothing further before us but a hunt for reminiscences pushed to a grand scale (or rather to the smallest), which only does business under the name of the Darwin theory without needing to incommode that theory at all, if the point be merely to prove that "nothing new exists under the sun," or that "everything has been already once before." The author's industry in searching out and bringing together material, as well as his acuteness in conjecture and in combination, should be held in honor; but he may not hope that the world will take his expositions as seriously as he perhaps takes them himself, or that the Darwin theory will be deemed of as much importance for the art of Music as it is for natural science. Indeed we must think the application of this theory to music—in spite of Herr Tappert—practicable only in the most vague and general outlines. A final decision, however, is reserved for one who is equally well versed in music and in the natural sciences,—a qualification to which the writer of these lines at least makes no claims.

In the third and fourth essays, as we have said, Herr Tappert occupies himself with the "Superfluous Trichord" and with the "Altered Chords," chiefly with regard to their nature and their applicability; he soundly rates the theorists, who in his opinion have not paid these chords due honor, and prognosticates for them a great future yet (the way to which he sees already paved in the productions of the "musicians of the Future," of whom he announces himself to be a zealous follower). The musical theorist, or more especially the harmonist, by profession, will find much to interest him in these chapters of Herr Tappert's book, but also much to make him shake his head, much riding of hobbies with assumed principles.

The essay entitled "A Dogma" has for its subject various doctrines and prescriptions, laid down by the earlier theory as irreversible, but which nevertheless gradually have been reversed, as, for example, that the final chord of a piece of music must contain no third; that the step of the tritone (*b flat* to *e*, for instance) was never to be taken; that no piece of music might begin with any other than the trichord fundamental harmony and must close with the same, &c., &c. The examples he has here adduced of both the former and the present usage, are interesting and testify to the great reading of the author.

Very amusing is the concluding essay, entitled "*Zooplastik in Tönen*." It brings together and compares the various attempts to represent ani-

mals in music, and, as might be expected Haydn's "Creation" affords a particularly rich crop of examples; but there are also cited "animal tone-paintings" out of other, especially older and rarer musical works, and the whole, in its ironical attitude towards tone-painting altogether, furnishes much sport.

Finally, in respect of style and manner of presentation, Herr Tappert's book is fresh and often attractive through witty points and brilliant strokes of light. If one cannot approve all that the author thinks and would have us think, yet his "Musical Studies" must leave in every unprejudiced mind the impression of intellectual cleverness and of an honest will. E. B.

## Mendelssohn's Letters to Baermann.\*

### III.

Paris.

And now, to tell you the story at full length. The clarinet players here are in a miserable condition, so that in the orchestra of the Conservatoire, which is in most respects really admirable, there are two clarionets, neither of them fit to dust your coat, if tone, execution, mode of playing and ordinary fairness still go for anything in this world. The first one recently, in the minuet of the Pastoral Symphony, commenced his solo a bar too soon, but went on puffing away as merrily as possible, never observing that it sounded quite infamous, and that some of the audience, and among others the undersigned, were making dreadful wry faces, and that the director had got stomach-ache; the horn ought then to have come in, but took fright, and did not come in, on which the violins took fright also and played softer and softer, on which the thing every moment became more like a Dutch concert, for they were all out, and only a movement in 3-4 time being close at hand, saved them from the disgrace of stopping short, and beginning all over again. So, as I was going home, it was but natural that I should think over the affair, and exclaim to myself "This is beyond bearing," and instantly resolve to write to you, and tell you all about it, and ask if you can look on quietly while the Parisian clarinet world is going on in such a shabby fashion. For this fellow is a professor in the Conservatoire, and I understand the best here. I believe his name is Dacosta. Seriously, however, do you really feel no inclination to found a clarinet seminary here? I think it would be a very good plan, and sure to succeed; besides, you had already a project to go to Paris, so I most strongly advise you to do so, for they have not the most remote idea of your instrument, and therefore would doubly appreciate it; it would also be a capital thing, in my opinion, if you were to bring one of your pupils with you, for instance, your son Carl, for I am convinced that he could easily find a good and respectable livelihood here. This is, of course, merely a suggestion, but I wish you would reflect on it. Besides, you told me to look round, and to write to you if I could find anything for Carl, and I do so now, as this seems to me a good opportunity. I hinted something of the kind last autumn to Leitrum, and said you wished to get an appointment for your son; he seemed much taken with his playing, and praised him highly, but I don't know whether anything resulted from it, as the orchestra appeared to be already complete. I saw a good deal of Lindpaintner during those

\* From Nohl's collection of "Letters of Distinguished Musicians: Gluck, Haydn, P. E. Bach, Weber, Mendelssohn." Translated by LADY WALLACE.

few days, and feel a great liking for him. You are right in what you say of him, he is certainly very devoted to you, and if you had only accompanied me on that journey, it would indeed have been famous. At all events, I hope to return thither once more to enjoy with might and main music, flirting, and merry pranks, but then we must go there together. And now I will begin my letter.

Paris, April 16, 1832.

Dear old Bärmann and Friend,

The above is the continuation of the story I began in Rome [see No. 2], and Dohrn, who came in at the moment, wishing to put in something of his own, wrote the postscript. How long it is since I heard from you! But I must first of all apologize for not having written to you for such a time. Do not take it amiss, my dear fellow, for it was impossible. I was as sulky as a porpoise, and felt as miserable during the whole winter as a fish on dry land. There was always something amiss with me, and at length I became positively ill, and was obliged to stay in bed, and submit to have my stomach rubbed by an old woman, to have warm cloths applied, to perspire a great deal, eat nothing, and undergo a great many visits and much compassion, wishing every one at the devil, swallowing peppermint pills, and bored to death; at last, by dint of constant perspirations, my bad humor and my stomach-ache were driven away, and likewise the dreaded cholera. Now that I have done with perspirations, I feel for the first time for many months light and cheerful, and so I write to you forthwith, you capital clarinet *bear and man!* At times (for instance now), I would give the whole of Paris to be able to hear even for a minute that sweet world of magic tones of every grade that stream from your wooden instrument so light and bright, so mellow and low, flowing and glowing, clear and dear, pure and sure, clinging and singing so sweetly. But without any compliments, the truth is that I am as glad as a *Spitz* at the thoughts of seeing you again. I have passed a very dull winter, what with illness and the stupidity of the circles here. Devil take them all! I never felt quite right, either as regards myself or others. Still I composed many new pieces, and am now publishing a whole pile of new music in Leipzig, designed to make a great man of me. Probably you will never hear any of it, and my fame will remain *incognito*. I have heard some of my things performed in public here, and played myself several times. The Parisians applauded and extolled me, and some of the musicians looked very savage at me when it was over, so I have certainly made effect! For some weeks past, however, everything has come to an end, for cholera has been raging fearfully here, and the people no longer think of music but of cholera. Whoever could get away, went away, and the rest do not now go out in the evening, and if I had not been forced to stay, and have my stomach rubbed by an old woman, I would have been off long ago myself. I hope to get away in a few days to London. There the cholera is quite gone.

#### IV.

To Bärmann.

My adored Heinrich,\*

I can no longer guard my secret; indeed you must long ago have guessed it by my eyes, by the disquiet that assails me the moment you enter the room, by my whole demeanor. Away then, oh! virgin timidity, and may love alone guide my goose-quill! for, ah! I love you but too dearly! My father would be furious were he to know, for he destines the Crown Prince of Buxtehude to be my husband! But what matters a Crown Prince to a heart touched by love? Ever since hearing the dulcet tones proceeding from your mouth (I mean when you play the clarinet), since then, I say, I think of you alone. I must speak to you, and secretly too, in some retired spot; meet me then to-morrow at two o'clock at

\* Outside is written, "To Herr Heinrich Bärmann, first clarinet, private, and a post-mark sketched with the word *Trapezunt*. The whole letter is written in the forged hand of a lady.

the Scheidel Coffee-house,† where your Isabella is to dine. There we shall be private, and may continue private, and that will be very charming.

The whim seized me to set to music my passion for you, and thus to elude the vigilance of my governess; so the chief master of ceremonies and head cook, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, has written the enclosed page for you.

Ah! how my heart palpitates! Forgive so many blots; they are tears that have dropped on the paper while writing.

To eternity I am and ever shall be your affectionately devoted

ISABELLA, PRINCESS OF TRAPEZUNT.

P.S.—I wear a cholera bandage at present; do so likewise for love of me.

† A frequented coffee-house in the Kaufinger Strasse in Munich.

#### Three Pianists.

(From the London "Sunday Times," April 12).

The last Monday Popular Concert of the season was remarkable in several respects. Audience, programme, and performers contributed to this result. The first named did so by exhibiting a power of compression far beyond any past experience within the walls of St. James's Hall. We are told that a hundred persons more than ever had succeeded before managed to effect an entrance. In proportion to the cubic space required by that hundred was the noble endurance of the whole. But there was compensation in the music, and, also, in the very fact of making part of such an audience. One likes to be attached to a superlative. Then the programme was remarkable for its length and comprehensiveness. Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Meyerbeer, and Molière contributed to it—men of all eras in modern music, and of all styles. Lastly, the performers were remarkable as presenting a combination of talent rarely brought together. Joachim, prince of fiddlers, and Piatti, prince of violoncellists, were there, and with them three pianists who stand by general consent in the very front rank of their profession. It is with these last that we have now to do.

We can imagine circumstances under which three pianists at one concert would be a sore affliction. If all, or some, were bad, for example, or if all were equally good, and in precisely the same respects, we should have reason to dread them, in the one case out of regard for nerves, in the other out of consideration for patience under monotony. Happily the latter can rarely come about. In culture, taste, and execution, artists may be on a level; but their individuality asserts itself in performance, and no two, however equal, can give the same reading of the same thing. Hence there was no monotony at St. James's Hall, when Mme. Schumann, Mme. Goddard, and Mr. Charles Hallé appeared together; rather was there an interesting diversity which deserves attention after the event has passed.

Mme. Schumann is clearly at the head of the special class of pianists, to which she belongs—a class we may, for distinction's sake, call the inspired. The inspired pianist, being a popular individual, is not a rare phenomenon. The source and nature of his inspiration, however, are sometimes of doubtful genuineness, because, the value of the article being great, it pays him to palm off a sham upon the unwary. The trick usually succeeds, since the unwary are numerous and the outward and visible signs of inspiration are easily assumed. He gulls the public to a wonderful extent and with marvellous ease. His *modus operandi* is as simple as the apparatus with which David brought down Goliath. Just as the youthful Israelite needed only a sling and a stone, so the inspired pianist requires only absorption and gesticulation. By help of a mirror the former can soon be acquired, and the countenance be made to assume a rapt and ecstatic expression. The latter is even more easy to work up. Let there be sufficient swaying to and fro, sufficient wrestling with the instrument after the fashion of a musical Samson Agonistes, and

a sufficiently "high action" upon the keys, and the thing is done. Then the public say: "See what expression! what intellect! what execution!"—although, it may be, the floor round about the performer is littered with dropped notes. Of the school to which this sham artist attaches himself Mme. Schumann is chief, not from choice, as in his case, but because she cannot help it, which is both a distinction and a material difference. She is a real artist, and a great one, but with an ill-balanced constitution. Her sympathy with the work to be done is intense, it is, also, unrestrained. Hence that laboring style, that want of repose, and the impression she makes of always working at the top of her power. It is not so much an excess of sympathy that causes this as a want of check action by which to control its manifestations. The result is to impress the undiscerning public: but familiarity with it brings disquiet. One cannot always admire the rush and roar of a cyclone. In a little while the peaceful centre of gyration becomes a blessed relief. Mme. Schumann's more salient peculiarity is, therefore, of little real advantage. In point of fact, it is a formidable disqualification for certain work. The fact that she plays best the music of her late husband may arise in part from other causes than a natural devotion to his memory. The predominant style of that music suits her genius, as do, to a less extent, the more passionate and dramatic compositions of other masters by the interpretation of which she has gained renown. But she cannot understand their gentler moods. Engaged upon a quiet and reposeful movement, Mme. Schumann engenders uncomfortableness such as would arise from seeing Pegasus in harness, or the safety valve of a high pressure engine sat upon. In some respects her prevailing characteristic works ill. It is opposed to finish, to accuracy, and to that power of expression which comprehends all a composer's ideas. But, on the other hand, give her a congenial work, and there is something magnificent in Mme. Schumann's impetuosity. Her performance of the C minor *allegro molto vivace*, in Beethoven's *Sonata quasi una Fantasia* in E flat (Op. 27), has all the grandeur and a good deal of the noise of an avalanche.

Our countrywoman, Mme. Goddard, is in marked contrast to Mme. Schumann as regards manner. The eye is conscious of no demonstrated inspiration in her case. She sets to work calm and equable, with an apparently perfect self-possession. There is no excess of sympathy, neither is there any lack of it; just as in her playing force is never unpleasantly prominent and never absent when wanted. In fact, Mme. Goddard at the piano is the impersonation of quiet strength. Either nature or art, or both, combined, have enabled her to regulate the outflow of her feeling with the greatest nicety. She is like a Nasmyth's hammer, which can crack a nut, without injuring the kernel, one minute, and, if need be, smash a blacksmith's anvil the next. Listening to her, as she plays some delicate *Lied* of Mendelssohn's, and noting the finely graduated tones, the feathery touch and the easy gentleness with which the work is done, it is difficult to recognize the artist who, preserving the same calmness of manner, can thunder out the *chorale* in Mendelssohn's E minor *Fugue* with all requisite power and majesty of style. She realizes the idea of a hand of iron in a velvet glove. Her touch can be gentle as the alighting of a butterfly, it can also be firm as the footfall of a giant. But, this well-balanced temperament and nicely regulated action are not our countrywoman's only merits. Her ability is many-sided, and enables her to be equally at home with whatever she has to do. From a showy fantasia up to Beethoven's stupendous B flat sonata (Op. 106)—this is to say, over the entire range of pianoforte music—she walks with assured tread. This is a great as well as a true thing to say, but almost as great, and certainly as true, is the remark that Mme. Goddard never stoops to artifice to catch the plaudits of those upon whom it is easy to impose. She presents her audience with the music of the chosen master in all faithfulness and simplicity; and if the presentation elicits no thanks, so much the worse for her audience.



A critic once said that if Mme. Schumann is likened to the torrid zone, Mr. Charles Hallé must be compared with the frigid. There is truth in the remark. The latter never stirs the emotions, making the pulse beat quicker with excitement; never feels enthusiasm and, therefore, never communicates any. He simply challenges admiration, of which he must fairly be accorded a good deal. His mechanical precision is like that of a musical box; and the neatness and delicacy of his execution are wonderful to note. He is an artist of independent thought, and does nothing without a reason which satisfies himself. But his unvarying coldness checks the great results which such qualities might produce. He has the air of an anatomical demonstrator, who cuts up the "human form divine," unmoved by the nature of his "subject." He always seems to be engaged upon details, unmindful of the grand whole, while not unfrequently he appears to see no more of his work at a time than what comes within the field of a microscope. Hence his habit of minute elaboration, of bringing into undue prominence features which strike his fancy, and the consequent disproportion of the several parts of his work. Yet with all this Mr. Hallé is not an artist the musical public can spare. Under him they can study with coolness and self-possession the master he plays, feeling sure that not a note is missed nor a passage "scamped."

The conjunction of these three artists at St. James's Hall was one of rare interest, not only because it suggested such observations as the foregoing, but because the inevitable comparisons were not all unfavorable to the representative of "unmusical England."

### The Musical Festival.

BOSTON, MAY 11, 1868.

#### To the Worcester Palladium:

The old Handel and Haydn Society has reason to be proud of its first triennial Festival. Proud of the executive ability which could so successfully plan and carry out arrangements which have led to results so satisfactory; proud of the talent, not only in its own ranks, but of that summoned from outside; proud of a conductor so fully equal to his work; proud of a community ready to sustain it in so gigantic an enterprise. As we looked upon the crowded and enthusiastic audiences, and above all, noticed how great was the majority of those who went for the music rather than for purposes less worthy, our thoughts went back to the first Festival, entered upon with no little fear and trembling, discouraging at first with its thin attendance, but increasing in popular interest, until, on the last day, the Hall could not contain the great audience that came, amazed at the wealth of musical treasure spread before them. In these four years, music has grown to be a necessity for the million, rather than a luxury for the few; and when we say music, we mean that of the highest order; "Seek ever, in Art and Life, the highest!"

The opening day, Tuesday, 5th inst., brought a fine May morning. The audience was large and expectant. Punctually, the great chorus, seven hundred and forty-seven in number, began to enter, one at a time, on each side of the platform, climbing up the amphitheatre like steps, which were raised in semi-circular form to the upper balcony. The scene was remarkable. The bright faces of the soprano and alto singers, relieved against the rich, parti-colored background of their own dresses, afforded a brilliant yet harmonious effect of color, upon which the eye rested with pleasure. Martin Luther's Choral, "Our God is a sure defence," as sung by the chorus, with Nicolai's arrangement for orchestra and organ, was a most impressive introduction to the Festival. Its strong, sustained tones, were followed by a short symphony, in which were suggested the mystery and the many-and-oft perplexities of life. Then the chorus break in, soft and distant, like the singing of angels, and most fitly it seemed to lead the way to the performance of the "Ninety-Fifth Psalm" of Mendelssohn, a song of sincere homage and heart-felt gratitude. Parepa's "Come let us sing," was most inspiring, the chorus joining "with gladness," and in "tuneful rejoicing." The "Psalm" was well chosen for the opening. So, too, Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise," which followed. Its theme never seemed so richly set in beauty and splendor as when given by that matchless body of stringed instruments, over seventy in number, and of a tone singularly fine, firm, and resonant. It pervades the first two movements, a silver thread, interwoven around which play beautiful images, often fanciful and brilliant, leading finally to the *adagio*, which is deeply religious in sen-

timent, full of sacred fervor and sublimity. The theme, familiar grown, is resumed at the opening of the Cantata; and when the chorus took it up, the effect was electrical. It was a perfect jubilee. Parepa's "Praise thou the Lord," was in her finest manner, and the duet, with Miss Philipps, worthy the *encore* it received. Mr. Simpson sang well the air, "Watchman, will the night soon pass?" with its suppliant repetition; and the soprano reply, "The night is departing," was like a burst of light. The choral was very effective, as indeed was every choral which was sung during the week; and, with the unison passages, was the perfection of congregational singing. The final chorus of the Hymn rolled forth in great waves of harmony, massive and powerful. The opening of the Festival proved wholly satisfactory.

The second performance was that of the oratorio of "Samson," on Tuesday evening. Although there are strong and telling points in the work, as a whole it is not one that appeals to the public, unless the long tenor recitatives were entrusted to a Sims Reeves for spirited and dramatic rendering. Very fine was the performance of some of the choruses of "Samson," fully compensating for the dull portions of the work. "Then round about the starry throne," was superbly given; and full of variety and interest was the double chorus of Israelites and Philistines. Messrs. Simpson, Whitney, and Wilde sang acceptably, but the great feature of the evening was, of course, Parepa's singing of "Let the bright seraphim," with trumpet obbligato. It was incomparably fine in effect. The chorus, "Let their celestial concerts all unite," was brilliant in the extreme.

Next followed the orchestral and vocal concerts of Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. At the former, the particular "sensation" was the first appearance in Boston of the pianist Miss Alide Topp, a pupil of Von Bülow, who took her audience by storm, and in the most quiet, unassuming manner. She came out with all the *prestige* of reputation, and youthful beauty and grace; won all hearts by her simple, German manner, her affability and modesty; and then astonished and delighted every one, even the most critical, by her wonderful performance of Schumann's Concerto in A minor. As her fingers flew over the keys, mastering difficulties without seeming effort, playing, as is her practice, without the score; her graceful bended figure, and her rapt face—sometimes upturned for a moment, made a picture long to be remembered. Around her were grouped the orchestra, their earnest, artistic faces watching her intently; some listening with wonder to her execution, some with eyes aglow with delight, some pressing forward mentally, as if reading the future, others gazing back to awakened visions of Rhine-land and Father-country. The *encore* was most hearty, even demonstrative. Her acknowledgment did not suffice. After the piano was closed, and its wrappings prepared for removal from the platform, the applause of the audience was so unbounded that Miss Topp re-appeared, the piano was re-opened, and the player gave another selection, of Modern-German character, not sufficiently classical for the critics, but acceptable to most of the audience, evidently. The contralto air from "Rinaldo," "Lascia ch'io pianga," was superbly sung by Miss Philipps, whose artistic singing affords the deepest pleasure. Her contributions to the Festival have been some of the choicest vocal gems. The overtures on Wednesday afternoon were Weber's to "Euryanthe," and Beethoven's "Leonora," No. 3. The former was most enlivening; whetting the appetite for more from an orchestra so well-balanced, so finely drilled, always entering into the spirit of its work with artistic devotion. The playing of the "Leonora" was one of the best performances of the week. The overture was heard in all the perfection of its magnificence and breadth. The symphony was Mozart's in G Minor. The first movement is characterized by charming delicacy and sweetness, blended with a majestic stateliness. The *andante*, of rare beauty and rest-full sentiment; the *minuetto*, graceful and sparkling, and the exceedingly effective *finale*, were tone-pictures to be pleasantly cherished in memory.

On Thursday afternoon there was the *Meeresstille* overture, with its Turner-like atmosphere, and the never-so-joyful "coming into port." Beethoven's song, "Ah, Perfidio," sung with impassioned feeling, by Parepa; Spohr's Violin Concerto in G major, admirably played by Carl Rosa. Its calm, dreamy beauty seemed to hold the audience spell-bound, and there was scarcely a rustle of fan or programme, until the closing strain. The Symphony was Schubert's, in C major; one of the most excited so much enthusiasm at one of the later concerts of the Harvard Musical Association. To many, as played by that great orchestra, it was a new revelation of the genius of the young man for whom Beethoven prophesied a great name among musical composers. It opens with a slow movement of rare beauty, succeeded by

a *crescendo* of great power, which is wrought out with fine effect, and culminating in a *forte* passage of brazen splendor, with charming interweavings of delicate fancies. The theme of the *andante* is a minor air of much poetic beauty; the *scherzo* brilliant with most effective light and shade; the *finale* a whirl of splendor upon splendor—a fitting climax for a work of such grandeur. Towards the close it returns to the original theme, to which it gives a simple, winning accompaniment. Around it the different instruments weave graceful images, as if beguiling it to stay. But soon comes the final strain, indescribably sweet and charming, and then the tumultuous applause of the audience—delighted beyond measure with the work and its masterly rendering.

On Thursday evening, "St. Paul" was given, with fine success. The choruses generally were well sung, some of them being especially remarkable for power and good gradation of light and shade. "O great is the depth," was well given; and there was great strength and massive grandeur in others, among them "Arise, and shine!" and "Sleepers, awake!" The chorals were unusually impressive. The solo-singers were Miss Houston, Mrs. Cary, and Messrs. Simpson and Rudolphsen. Each sang well, and they were well received. Miss Houston's conscientious rendering of oratorio-music often affords us more satisfaction than the brilliant efforts of singers of world-wide fame. Mrs. Cary's singing of "The Lord is mindful," considering song and singer, could not escape an *encore*; while Mr. Simpson's singing of "Be thou faithful," was similarly complimented.

The Friday afternoon concert opened with the *Tannhäuser* overture, and we doubt if it ever had so fine a rendering in this country. Its barbaric splendor and quaint fancies were finely developed. Parepa's singing of the great *scena* from Oberon, "Ocean, thou mighty monster," was one of her triumphs. The air has a peculiarly romantic beauty, suggestive of wild sea traditions, and pervaded with the primitive freshness of Ossian's poems. Two movements of an unfinished symphony by Schubert, (B minor), were given. The *allegro* was stormy, strong, and fervid; the *andante*, placid and calm, with passages of exceeding delicacy; the whole embodying much of Schubert's genius. And then came the great event of the week, the performance of Beethoven's Choral Symphony, for which alone it were worth while to assemble the great chorus and the grand orchestra, and call that one hour a Festival! Could the auspices have been better? Scarcely. And the result? Fine, beyond description! This immortal work tells the story, as it has never been told by painter, poet, or other musician, of the conflict between the human soul and this life to which it is bidden; of that constant seeking for happiness, that inward aspiration for something beyond, that makes life a struggle and a warfare. How perfectly the music of the symphony interprets all this! How at times the clouds break away, and, for a while, life wears a rosy hue! How the curtains are again drawn about us, shutting us from human sympathy and love; and, with fear and trembling we are left to gird ourselves for the conflict with self—to tread the wine-press alone! Then, when resignation holds sway, and trust begins to take possession of the soul, a clearer vision is given, and, as from a mountain height, we look down upon the petty cares and strifes of life, and tread them under our feet, resolving that they shall be our servants; not we, theirs! The instrumental portion of the symphony received the finest possible interpretation, and we could dwell with pleasure upon it, did time and space allow. But the choral, the words from Schiller's "Hymn to Joy," surpassed anything in our musical experience. No language can describe the effect of that wild delirium of joy which follows the solution of the great problem—"Love to God and man!" and every listener, however he interpreted the music, must have been lifted to a giddy height, from which the descent was slow and painful. People looked at each other as if uncertain of their own identity. There was a struggle for breath, as if respiration had ceased; and there was no relief in words, for they came not. In all the excited multitude there was but one calm face, and Beethoven looked down from his pedestal, with gaze so benignant and restful, that we questioned whether Crawford had not worked better than he knew.

After the Choral Symphony there seemed but one other work that could bear performance—Handel's *Messiah*, announced for Sunday evening. Still, an oratorio and a concert were yet upon the programme, and these, upon Saturday, proved very popular, and drew a large audience. At the concert, were performed Mendelssohn's Reformation Symphony, two overtures, the *Tell*, and *Jessonda*; and Miss Philipps sang with finest expression and excellent voice, Mozart's "Voi che sapete." Miss Topp excited another *furore*, with her playing of Liszt's piano-forte Concerto, (E flat major), and the whole proved just the

thing for the Saturday afternoon audience which was added to the regular attendance upon the Festival, even to overflowing into the entries.

On the evening of Saturday Haydn's *Creation* received splendid performance from the great musical host. The choruses with their splendid accompaniment of orchestra and organ were highly effective; light and graceful in the softer passages, they came out with grandeur in the great expressions of gratitude and praise. "The heavens are telling" was electrifying; loudly encored, it was repeated with even more fervor than at first. It was a great triumph. The solos were sustained by Parepa, Mrs. Cary, Mr. James Whitney, Mr. Rudolphsen, and Mr. M. W. Whitney; all faithful in their respective parts, each had some triumph by which to make himself remembered. Parepa was wonderful; the music so well suited to her voice, found a rare interpreter; "With verdure clad" and "On mighty pens" were masterpieces. The performance was a noble one, and one of the most interesting occasions of the week.

On Sunday evening came the last performance, and a glorious one it was! How the old *Messiah* grew in majesty and splendor at the hands of such interpreters! Perhaps the chorus was not always prompt to the instant; possibly Parepa cannot sing the *Messiah* airs so well as she sings almost everything else; but what of that? As a whole it was a triumphant close, and everybody felt that it was good to be there. There were great and thrilling effects of combined orchestra and chorus, but why detail them? They came just where they were expected—where Handel meant they should come. The contralto and bass airs were particularly well sung by Miss Phillips and Mr. Whitney, and Mr. Simpson did well when he forgot to use his *portamento*, and entered into the spirit of the music as he does when it comes within his capacity of performance. All in all, it was a grand finale of this first Triennial Festival of the worthy old Handel and Haydn Society.

STELLA.

### Schubert's Music to "Rosamunde."

(From the Crystal Palace Programmes).

- Overture, D minor.
- MS. 2. Entr'acte between 1st and 2nd Acts (B minor).
- MS. 3. Entr'acte between 2nd and 3rd Acts (D.)
- 3½. Romance for Soprano, "Der Volmond strahlt" (F minor).
- MS. 4. Chorus of Spirits.
5. Entr'acte between the 3d and 4th Acts (B flat).
- MS. 6. Shepherd Melody.
- MS. 7. Chorus of Shepherds.
- MS. 8. Huntsman's Chorus.
- MS. 9. Air de Ballet (G).

The above is a complete list of the music employed in the drama of *Rosamunde* on the two occasions of its representation at Vienna in 1823, and discovered, after a lapse of 44 years, during the course of the last autumn among the original part books in possession of Dr. Schneider, a well known amateur of Vienna. The pieces are enumerated in the order in which they come in the part books; but as there is not the relief of the intervening portions of the drama, it was thought better at the recent performance in the Crystal Palace to alter the order in one or two cases—as follows:—

- Overture.
1. Entr'acte in B minor. Allegro moderato.
2. Air de Ballet in G. Andantino.
3. Shepherd Melody in B flat. Andante.
4. Chorus of Shepherds in B flat. Allegretto.
5. Romance in F minor. Andante con moto.
6. Entr'acte in B flat. Andantino.
7. Chorus of Spirits in D. Adagio.
8. Entr'acte in B minor, and Air de Ballet in G.
9. Huntsman's Chorus in D. Allegro moderato.

Schubert did not compose an overture specially for this work. That which was played at the Crystal Palace, and which the part books show to have been originally performed, was written by Schubert a few months previously, for his opera of *Alfonso and Estrella*, while that published as *Rosamunde* (Op. 26), and frequently used in the daily practices of the Crystal Palace, belongs to the *Zauberharfe*, an opera which he had composed in 1820, three years before the date of *Rosamunde*.

The numbers presented on the occasion referred to for the first time to an English audience\* were 4, 6, 7, and 8. No. 3 was omitted. The overture was played at the concert of November 3, 1866, and Nos. 1, 5, and 9 on the 10th November, 1866, and 16th March, 1867. The romance, No. 3½, was also performed on both these occasions, but with an accompaniment scored by Mr. Manns from the piano-forte copy.

The following is the outline of the drama of *Rosamunde*, the production of Mme. Wilhelmine Chezy

\* The Shepherd's Chorus has been occasionally sung in London, but arranged as a part-song, the symphonies being omitted.

—translated from the abstract published in the Life of Schubert by Kreisler von Hellborn. Every effort was made by the writer (when at Vienna) to discover a copy of the full libretto, but without success; it probably was never printed. The abstract, however, is enough for our present purpose. It shows conclusively how independent Schubert's genius was of the materials which served to set it in motion; and it is impossible to discover anything in this most empty story fit to have inspired the lofty and tragic strains of much of the music which illustrates it.

By a caprice of her father's, the Princess Rosamunde, of Cyprus, has been brought up from the first as a shepherdess, with the understanding that on the completion of her eighteenth year her nurse is to reveal her rank, and that the crown is to be offered to her. In the meantime, the Prince of Candia, betrothed to Rosamunde in her cradle, has received a mysterious letter which has driven him to Cyprus. On the road thither the vessel is wrecked, and he alone of all the crew reaches the island alive. During the sixteen years of Rosamunde's disappearance the government of the island has been in the hands of Fulgentius, and he naturally receives the news of her existence with anything but satisfaction. Rosamunde and the Prince meet, and although both are in disguise each recognizes the other. The Prince, partly to test her constancy, partly because he is unable to rely on her companions, retains his disguise, enters the service of the Governor, rescues his daughter from robbers, and thus secures his confidence. This favorable state of affairs, however, is interrupted by a violent passion of Fulgentius for Rosamunde, which, when rejected, turns into no less violent hatred; he accuses her of being the cause of his daughter's misfortunes, and at length throws her into prison. Here he still pursues her, and attempts to kill her by a letter impregnated with a deadly and instantaneous poison, to be presented to her by the Prince, who is still disguised. Rosamunde in the meantime has contrived to escape to her nurse's cottage, where she lies concealed. Here the Prince finds her, and tells her of the wicked schemes of Fulgentius. Unfortunately Fulgentius surprises them together, and the result would be fatal if the Prince did not succeed in persuading him that he has presented the letter, and that its effect has been to take away the sense of Rosamunde—a statement which she corroborates by her mad behavior. Fulgentius, easily convinced, commits the care of Rosamunde to the Prince, and all seems in good train. At this moment arrives a letter from Albanus—the writer of the former mysterious letter to the Prince—who is aware of the secret of the Princess's troth, and is enraged at the bad government of Fulgentius. Fulgentius surprises the Prince in the act of reading this letter, and insists that he shall give it up and lose his life. But this the Prince does not intend; his determination is to live and marry. Instead of Albanus's letter, he contrives to give Fulgentius his own poisoned one. It has not lost its power. The Governor seizes it, tears it open, eagerly reads it, and immediately expires.

## Music Abroad.

### London.

CRYSTAL PALACE CONCERTS.—The last concert of the season 1867-8, on Saturday afternoon, terminated, in the worthiest possible manner, an unexampled series of high class performances. The first piece in the programme was the overture composed by Auber for the International Exhibition of 1862.

The overture was followed, after the accustomed and judiciously adopted "interval of five minutes," by the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven. The Ninth Symphony was the chief feature at the last of the fourteen concerts preceding Christmas; and it is agreeable to indulge in a belief that Mr. Manns may have it in contemplation to include two performances of this colossus of orchestral music in every future series of twenty-eight concerts. Such a step would merely be paying honor where honor is due. Fine as was the execution of the Ninth Symphony in December, it was even finer on the present occasion. The three orchestral movements as nearly reached perfection as in a work so complex, intricate, and difficult is in all likelihood feasible. Even the "allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso"—for reasons with which amateurs are acquainted, the most trying as well as the grandest and most impressive of all—was played with an accuracy, precision, and minute observance of the gradations of tone hardly to be surpassed. The inimitable *scherzo*, the principal theme of which—Herr Otto Jahn informs us—was suggested to Beethoven[?] by the sudden appearance of lights in a dark chamber, which caused the surrounding

objects, like the lights themselves, to dance before his eyes, was taken just a shade slower than before, by which increased distinctness, both of articulation and accent, was obtained. A more wonderful performance we cannot remember. The instruments, as Schumann observes in describing the *scherzo* of Mendelssohn's Scotch symphony in A minor (which, by the way, he curiously confounds with the Italian Symphony in A major), seemed to be "talking to each other." The playing of the "wind"—flutes, oboes, clarionets, bassoons, and horns—in the most melodious and beautiful of all symphonic trios, was absolutely irreproachable. Excellently handled, too, were the drums in F. The *scherzo* being in D minor, the drums, which are silent during the *trio* in the major, have no other note than F to play; but one of the most important points is allotted to them, in that interesting and original section of the movement where the rhythm of four bars is abandoned for a rhythm of three, by which ingenious contrivance all sense of monotony is avoided. Equally to be praised were the trombones, which impart such magical brightness of color to the close of the *trio*, the lowest of the three being, as usual, represented by the mellow-toned "euphonion." In the *adagio molto e cantabile* in B flat—again the most melodious and beautiful even of Beethoven's slow movements—where, after a prelude of two bars, assigned to bassoons and clarionets, the violins begin to sing a melody of which the parallel can scarcely be found in music, not a fault could be detected. The admirably sustained delicacy of the wind instruments, combined with a justness of intonation never for one instant wavering, harmonized gratefully with the unceasing stream of tune to which (the largest share of responsibility devolving upon the first violins, in varying, embellishing, and developing the leading theme) it is the task of the string instruments to give utterance—a task achieved from beginning to end in perfection. If the *finale*, built upon Schiller's *Ode to Joy*, was not as uniformly beyond reproach as what preceded it, the choral parts, to say nothing of vocal solos for soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass, being of excessive difficulty, it may at least be said, without exaggeration, that, on the whole, a finer performance of even this portion of the symphony has rarely, if ever, been heard in England. The solo quartet was represented by Mlle. Enequist (soprano), Miss Julia Elton (contralto), Mr. Wilbye Cooper (tenor), and Herr Wallenreiter (bass); the chorus by the Crystal Palace Choir, which is making such rapid progress that hopes are reasonably entertained of its becoming, at no very distant period, a worthy companion to the already renowned Crystal Palace Orchestra. The vast audience listened, "quiet as a stone," from one end of the symphony to the other, only breaking out, at the intervals between the several movements, into loud applause, which, at the end of the *finale*, became quite enthusiastic. It would seem that this, the most extraordinary of the "tone-poems" of Beethoven, now forty-four years since its birth, was becoming decidedly "popular."

In comparison with such a performance of such a work the rest of the concert was inevitably tame. It might almost be laid down as a maxim that after the Ninth Symphony nothing else should come. It is a concert in itself, and so completely exhausts the attention of those who listen to it as it ought to be listened to, that they are incapable of doing justice to anything that may follow. Nevertheless, the playing by Herr F. Grützmacher, violoncellist to the King of Saxony, of a concerto, or rather, its form considered, a *concertino* (with orchestral accompaniments), of his own, well calculated to exhibit the capabilities of the instrument, and to display to advantage his own remarkable skill as an executant, would, under no matter what circumstances, have excited real interest; nor was it surprising that Mr. Arthur Sullivan's very charming setting of the pearl of "lullabies," "O hush me, my baby" (*Guy Mannering*) as a part-song, given so thoroughly well as it was by the Crystal Palace Choir, should elicit a unanimous encore. But there were yet other interesting things. Herr Wallenreiter, a bass from the Court Opera of Stuttgart, evidently an artist of experience, sang with genuine spirit one of the most striking and characteristic of all Handel's dramatic pieces—the recitative, "Io, tremate," and air, "O voi dell' Erebo" (from the *Resurrezione*), in which the composer of the *Messiah* seems to point out the way for Gluck, but over a road too difficult for the timid feet of Gluck to tread.—*Mus. World*, May 2.

The programme for the new season is just out. As the Palace was opened in June, 1854, the present will be the fifteenth season, and no greater sign of its vitality can be given than the liberality of the arrangements which the directors are enabled to offer to season ticket holders. The policy which has been pursued for the last three years receives further exemplification this year by the season ticket being made



available during the four days of the Handel Festival. For the first three months of the season, May, June, and July, upwards of twenty special fête days have been appointed, admission to which on these, and on the other extra days throughout the year, would alone cost a non-season ticket holder considerably more than ten times the price of a season ticket. If the ordinary days be added, it will be seen that a season ticket, if used every day, would reimburse its owner considerably more than twenty times its cost. The admission to so great a musical celebration as the Handel Festival is in itself sufficient to stamp the value of the season ticket, and warrant its familiar eulogium as the "cheapest guinea's worth in the world."

The first event of the season is the grand opening performance this day, of Mendelssohn's "Reformation Symphony," till recently unheard in England, to be played by 150 instrumentalists, conducted by Mr. Manns. The music by the same composer to *Edipus at Colonus* will be given, with a chorus of 1,000 male voices, besides a miscellaneous selection by some of the chief artists of Her Majesty's Opera.

There will be eight opera concerts, on Saturdays, commencing on the 9th May: six supported by the principal artists from Her Majesty's Opera, the other two by the principal artists from the Royal Italian Opera.

The choral demonstrations by school children, conducted by Mr. Martin, Mr. Hullah and Mr. Sarll; the popular ballad concerts and the classical Saturday Concerts, will be continued.

**THE OPERAS.** A few sentences from the *Orchestra*, of April 25 and May 2, will show what has been going on:

Nothing could have been better than the cast of "*Rigoletto*" on Saturday at Her Majesty's, or than the acting and singing of Mlle. Kellogg as *Gilda* the heroine. Indeed the assumption deserves to be assigned a prominent place in operatic records. It was more than a success: it was a triumph. Hitherto, the American prima donna has borne the reputation of a careful and conscientious artist, rather than a performer into whom, as the Germans might say, the "genial" element has entered; but this study of *Gilda* was so perfect, betrayed such intensity and passion, with the pervading homeliness yet unimpaired, that if, as stated, the performance was a first one, we must credit Mlle. Kellogg with something more than carefulness or clockwork proficiency: we must recognize in her that unerring truthfulness of instinct which is only another name for genius.

"*Faust*," given at Convent Garden on Saturday for the first time this season, introduced the new (American) prima donna, Mlle. Vanzini (Van Zandt), as a dark-haired *Marguerite*. The other characters were thus apportioned:—*Faust*, Signor Mario; *Mephistopheles*, M. Petit; *Valentine*, Signor Cotogni; *Wagner*, Signor Tagliafico; *Siebel*, Mlle. Locatelli; and *Martha*, Mlle. Anese. Scarcely the best suited role, we think, is the part of *Marguerite* in Mlle. Vanzini's hands. Her powers are of a gentle order: she is mild and calm, with a light, pure voice, and a manner from which the stirring qualities are absent. Notwithstanding the flexibility of her voice, and her general intelligence, she is in our opinion the least satisfactory representative of the character we have yet seen on the Italian stage.

On Monday a new *basso profundo* was introduced in the person of Sig. Colini, who took the part of *Bertram* in Meyerbeer's "*Robert le Diable*." Of the new-comer we may say that a correct school of singing, good phrasing, a tall, powerful figure, and an artistic knowledge of make up, recommended him at once to the audience; while as the performance went on and the fiendish purposes of *Bertram* were more developed, he showed so good an appreciation of the dramatic situation as to call down hearty applause and the opinion that Sig. Colini possessed histrionic talents nowise inferior to his vocal powers. His voice is not very full, but in correctness he makes up for the deficiencies of resonance. On the whole the management is to be congratulated on the acquisition of this young and clever artist—the more valuable in proportion to the rarity of good *bassi profondi*. Mlle. Fricci was excellent as *Alice*, and sang with accustomed success the favorite numbers of the opera, "*Vanne disse*" and "*Nel lasciar la Normandia*." A first appearance in *Isabella* proved Mlle. Sherrington's fitness to undertake the brilliant and florid class of music.

A treat to admirers of Beethoven was afforded on Saturday at Drury Lane, when "*Fidelio*" was performed, with Mlle. Tietjens as *Leonora*, Mlle. Sinico as *Marcellina*, Mr. Santley as *Pizarro*, and Signor Gassier as the *Minister*. The alterations from last year were Signor Bettini for Signor Gardoni in the part of *Florestan*, and Signor Foli for Herr Rokitan-

sky in the part of *Rocco*. No part in all Mlle. Tietjens' large repertory can be found more suitable to her capacities than this role of *Leonora*. In splendid voice, in the full enjoyment of her physical powers, with a grasp of passion and pathos never at any time in her career surpassed, she unites all the diversities of grandeur and energy and tragedy in one character.

At the other house, after a repetition of "*Faust*" on Monday with the cast we have already noticed, "*Guillaume Tell*" was given on Tuesday for the first time this season: the *Matilda* being sustained by Mlle. Vanzini, and the part of *Arnoldo* affording occasion for the debut of a M. Lefranc. Neither impersonation calls for special welcome. The great barrier to the frequent performance of Rossini's masterpiece—the want of a capable tenor for the part which Tamberlik illustrated with that wonderful high C in the "*Suivrez-moi*," and which Duprez rendered immortal—will scarcely be removed by M. Lefranc.

**COLOGNE.**—The Rhenish Musical Festival will be held this year in Cologne, at Whitsuntide, under the direction of Herr Ferdinand Hiller. As the first festival was held at Düsseldorf, in 1818, this will be the 50th anniversary. On the first day, the programme will include Handel's *Messiah*, with Mmes. Wipern and Joachim, Drs. Gunz and Schmidt as solo singers. Herr Joachim, also, will play a solo. Among the pieces set down for the second day are: *Overture*, Gade (conducted by the composer); "*Whitsuntide Cantata*," Bach (arranged by Robert Franz); Eighth Psalm, No. 114, Mendelssohn; and Ninth Symphony, Beethoven. On the third day, there will be an *Overture*, Ferdinand Hiller; a *Symphony*, Schumann; a *Violin Concerto* played by Herr Joachim; and various vocal pieces by the solo singers.

On Palm Sunday the usual performance of J. S. Bach's *Passion-music* took place at the Gürzenich room. The soli on the occasion were intrusted to Frä. H. Scheuerlein (soprano), Frau. H. Hüfner-Harken, from Geuers (contralto), Herr Schild, from Dresden (tenor), Herr Hill, from Frankfurt (baryton), and M. Du Mont, an amateur (bass). The choruses were divided as follows: Mixed chorus of the *jugends*, by the pupils of the Conservatoire. The boy's chorus, by the pupils of the Gymnasium, and the double chorus, by the Sing-Akademie and the Männer-Gesang-Verein. The band numbering as usual, there were nearly 600 performers. Herr Musik-Director F. Weber presided at the organ as in former occasions.

**AMSTERDAM.**—Concert of the Cecilia Society: *Overture to Anacreon*, Cherubini; *Symphony*, Verhulst; *Second Symphony*, Beethoven, etc.—Concert of the "Felix Meritis" Society: *Pastoral Symphony*, Beethoven; *Concertstück for Violoncello*, Servais; *Two movements from the B minor Symphony*, Schubert; *Overture to Genoevea*, Schumann.

**BREMEN.**—A highly satisfactory performance of Herr Löwe's oratorio, *Johann Huss*, was lately given, under the direction of Herr H. Karth, on which occasion the same composer's *overture* to Sir Walter Scott's *Kenilworth* was also comprised in the programme.

**MUNICH.**—At the second Subscription Concert of the Musical Academy were performed: *Overture to Die Vestalin*, Spohr; *Symphony*, C minor, Haydn; *Concertstück* for two Violins with Orchestra, Venzl; "*Reiter marsch*" (scored by the Abbé Liszt), Schubert; and *Third Symphony* E flat major, Schumann.

**HAMBURG.**—J. S. Bach's *Matthäus-Passion* was performed in *Passion-week* in St. Michael's church, under the direction of Herr von Bernuth, the solo vocalists being Mlles. Shreck, Baumeister, Herren O. Wollers and Stockhausen.

**FLORENCE.**—The programme of the last concert given by the Società del Quartetto contained exclusively instrumental pieces by Schumann. Mlle. Czillag was to have sung two of his vocal pieces, greatly to the disgust of the regular subscribers, who contended that the introduction of vocal music into the programme was a departure from the rule which always had governed, and always ought to govern, the Society. Their susceptibilities were spared the anticipated shock, however, by the fact that Mlle. Czillag was taken ill, and could not appear.—The Pergola is always empty when M. Gounod's *Romeo e Giulietta* is put up. The next opera to be produced is *Marta*, with Sgra. Lotti in the principal part.

## Twight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, MAY 23, 1868.

### The Triennial Festival.

To resume our uncompleted record (for which and for short-comings in what remains illness must be in part responsible), let us first go back to

#### THE OPENING PERFORMANCE.

*Tuesday Morning, May 5.* We had only room to mention its imposing grandeur and complete success. Of the three works chosen, we could best have spared the Festival Overture on "*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*," by Nicolai. If the object simply were to exhibit all the resources of the Festival, the 750 voices, the orchestra of 115 instruments, and the great Organ, massed together in colossal power and grandeur, that end was accomplished, and the effect on a miscellaneous audience was one of wonder and delight. But this work had been performed here twice before on similar occasions: at the choral dedication of the Organ, in November, 1863, and at the Festival three years ago. It hardly bears much repetition. The Choral itself is of course grand, and in its plain original form, or harmonized by Bach, we should have been content with it. The contrapuntal working of the theme and fragmentary phrases, with the fugue, that follow in the orchestra, is quaint and learned to be sure, but dry and uninspired. And then the second, lively, theme, so suddenly introduced and worked up with the Chorale, is of a very common, secular and homely sort; it bears too strong a likeness to "*Rule Britannia*," and gives a grotesque incongruity to the whole. With such a chorus, and especially with such a searching, marrowy tone of 70 or more stringed instruments, it was in an outward sense effective, a proclamation full of pomp and splendor giving assurance of great things to come. Yet we should have much preferred one of the Cantatas of Bach (a purpose which the directors did for a time entertain). Best of all would have been Bach's Cantata on this very Choral; and nothing short of that, perhaps, would have redeemed the Choral from the commonness into which it has been dragged by Meyerbeer's too popular perversion of it in his overture to the *Huguenots*. Otherwise, one or two less familiar chorals, of the best which Bach has harmonized, sung in parts by voices unaccompanied, or with alternate stanzas sung in unison and with full accompaniment, would have opened such a week with dignity and beauty.

Mendelssohn's 95th Psalm, "*Come let us sing*," was the one new thing (vocal) of the Festival; we do not remember that it was ever sung here except once by Mr. Parker's Club some years ago. It is short and sweet and full of fervor, masterly in style, nor does it lack variety or powerful contrasts. It begins with a Tenor Solo: "*O come, let us worship*," a warm, melodious, cheerful invitation, sung in good voice and style by Mr. SIMPSON, who as precentor ushers in the chorus with the same strain, enriched with arts of harmony, and in a few bars of solo again dismisses them before the final chords. It is a lovely chorus, and was beautifully sung. Then to the composed, peaceful rhythm succeeds the excited 6-4 of the more stirring, jubilant, tumultu-

ously tuneful chorus: "Come, let us sing to the Lord with gladness," taking pattern from a half-sentence of bright soprano solo (Mme. PAREPA-ROSA) soaring to a sustained high G and dropping an octave,—very animating in her large, clear tones. This splendid, overwhelming chorus, which is in C major, ends in a Canon in the minor; beginning with tenors and basses in unison, strong and stern: "For the Lord is a mighty God, and a mighty ruler over all false idols," in which Truth's terrible and warning aspect for a moment is disclosed with a right Old Testament Hebrew relish; of course the final chord is major—"a mighty God"—and triumphantly held out.

No. 3 is one of Mendelssohn's most characteristic and beautiful Duets, for two Sopranos, with a lovely undulating figure in the accompaniment: "In His hands are all the corners of the earth," very finely sung by Mme. ROSA and Miss PHILLIPS. From the gentle and beguiling stream of the Duet we are summoned by the bold fugued chorus: "For His is the sea," to a near religious sense of what is grand in Nature. In the vigorous, emphatic phrasing of its theme, first given by the basses, and startling by its upward leap of a flat seventh, bringing a vivid flash-of-lightning accent upon the word "sea," it is the most eloquent chorus in the Psalm, and with the rich and lively orchestration becomes almost graphic. It ends, however, in a gentler and familiar strain, a return of the opening theme: "O come, let us worship." We felt the full significance and grandeur of this chorus brought out in the rendering. It is in E flat, but the orchestra goes on, *diminuendo*, gradually modulating into a close on the full chord of D major, preparatory to the fifth and final piece in G minor, which opens with a sweet, sad, pleading strain (Andante, 3-8), for the Tenor Solo: "Henceforth, when ye hear His voice entreating, turn not deaf ears," &c. This touching strain is in one of the most characteristic and individual veins of Mendelssohn, akin to that of "Hear ye Israel" in *Elijah*, but more deeply shaded. The rhythmical flow is ruffled at the thought of Israel's rebellious hearts, and the instruments whisper with short breath, growing more and more excited, and swelling to a startling climax as the voice tells of the divine wrath; but the music means it more in sorrow than in anger. Then the pleading theme is sweetly taken up in chorus by the female voices only, with intermittent tenor solo, till finally it takes possession of the whole chorus, and is worked up with increasing power and volume, and more and more florid and highly colored instrumentation, until it reaches a pitch of agonizing earnestness, almost unendurable, in that reiterated *diminished seventh* chord: "Turn not deaf ears;" but instantly out of this stern rock is struck as it were a sweet spring of tears, a lovely instrumental figure leading us back to the meadows, and rippling around the remainder of the chorus, which is in the tender strain of the beginning, and thus brings the composition to a close, only with a whispered last reminder, loving and gentle, (yet again with *diminished seventh*, this time *pianissimo*): "Turn not deaf ears and hard hearts!"

But the grand feature of that morning's programme, and, as we have before said, about the most magnificent performance of the Oratorio kind that we remember in this country, was the "Hymn of

Praise." That *Sinfonie-Cantata* seemed to us that day, if never before, to be Mendelssohn's greatest sacred work,—at any rate the most felicitous and thoroughly transporting; in its originality of form so naturally and spontaneously developed, such an organic whole quickened by one vital thought and feeling. The three introductory Symphonic movements, the first so grand, and all so beautiful, were rendered to a charm by that great orchestra. Then one felt the fine and searching quality of that large body of first violins, the good, substantial tone in the middle strings, so rich and eloquently persuasive in the violoncellos especially, and the broad and satisfying double-bass foundations. But oboe, clarinet, bassoons, &c., also sang their melodic passages expressively, and all the wind instruments supplied their shades of color in due degree of delicacy and power. All went with precision, clearness, spirit-light and shade. It was very nearly perfect. Then the whole multitude of voices burst forth on that first chorus: "All men, all things," as if by an innate irresistible necessity, as if their song had all the while been potentially contained, and thus far detained, in the long Symphony. The effect was stupendous, a glorious sun-burst of light and life and praise, dazzling and flooding all. And so on through the quickened tempo, when they take up the theme so strongly set at the beginning and the end of the first symphonic movement: "All that has life and breath, sing to the Lord."

The *Lobgesang* has become quite familiar here, and we have so often spoken of its merits that we need not discourse further on it, while so many topics still await their turn. Suffice it to say, that with the exception perhaps of some pressing of the tempo in two or three choruses at a little expense of clearness, the whole was so well done as to leave nothing to be desired. The exciting chorus: "The night is departing," especially the fugue part: "Let us gird on the armor of light," is so rapid, so complex, so taxing to voice and breath, that one doubts whether it ever can be perfectly executed; on the other hand that whole scene, beginning with the tenor recitative: "Will the night soon pass," then the clear, high tones of the soprano voice (Parepa) in heavenly assurance, then the chorus,—is so wonderfully dramatic, that the intention and the spirit of it cannot be lost in a rendering so good as that was. The solo parts were all good; Mme. Parepa-Rosa's voice seemed never more bright and birdlike, soaring with perfect ease. The Duet with Miss Phillips: "We waited for the Lord," with chorus rising full and tranquil like a tide of sweet, exhaustless harmony, was admirably sung, and the inevitable encore was insisted on with more than usual fervor. Mr. Simpson sang the watchman recitative and other solo portions in good voice, with taste and judgment, only not much inspiration.

#### TUESDAY EVENING. "SAMSON."

We have ever found this more tedious than any of Handel's Oratorios. And for the reason that it is not an Oratorio in the *distinctive* sense, of which the "Messiah" and "Israel in Egypt," Bach's Passions, and Mendelssohn's "St. Paul" are the best examples, although nearer to the dramatic origin of Oratorio before it had developed into an independent character of its own. "Samson" is a nondescript, mainly dramatic and personal, crowded with characters, who have great lengths of recitative, almost always given without life or point, and with arias, characteristic to be sure, and sometimes beautiful, very various, now quaintly florid like those of Delilah, now serious and noble like "Return, O God of hosts," now of this individuality, now that; but broken up into so many kinds and personalities, that all seems longer than it is, and even with the omission of a third part of the work, as on this occasion, it taxes patience to sit through it all. Scattered among these are splendid choruses, whose refreshment ever comes most timely; they sink into the mind like

rain into the thirsty desert. "O first created beam," "Then round about the starry throne," "Fixed in his everlasting seat," &c., are splendid pieces and superbly were they sung.

We do not say that there is not in nearly all these arias something to reward study, but, crowded into one work, they are as confusing and sit as heavily upon the spirits (so nimble through the choruses) as a promenade miscellaneous concert. Generally they fell to good interpreters,—excellent, in Mme. ROSA and Miss PHILLIPS. The former sang in several characters, warbling "the merry, merry pipe" of the *Philistine Woman*, and cooing Delilah's "plaintive turtle notes," with thorough comprehension and mastery of all the piquant accent and quaint, ingenious turns of phrase and ornament through which Handel makes this character so unmistakable. We were too unwell to stay through the last part, and lost the splendor of her "Let the bright Seraphim." Miss Phillips produced a deep impression in the contralto air, "Return," and her whole part of Micah was indeed admirable. Mr. WILDE, in the part of *Manoah*, showed himself possessor, hardly master of a rich and telling bass voice, which he used manfully, with fair execution and expression. Mr. WHITNEY had the declamatory part of *Harapha*, and did it ample justice. We wonder that such musical rodomontade as the air "Honor and arms," by whomsoever sung, can still find admirers; it is "as uninteresting as so pompous, commonplace a hero himself would be. *Samson* is German for *Samson*, but Mr. SIMPSON'S voice hardly suggests the strong man. He sang the sweeter portions well; best of all "Total Eclipse," an air which has a certain beauty of its own, but which to us is chiefly interesting as prologue to the sublime chorus: "O first created beam."

#### WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON.—CONCERT.

Overture, "Euryanthe".....Weber.  
Song, from "Rinaldo," "Lascia ch'io pianga".....Handel.  
Miss Adelaide Phillips.  
Symphony, (G minor).....Mozart.  
Concerto for the Piano-Forte, (A minor).....Schumann.  
Miss Alide Topp, (First appearance in Boston).  
Overture, "Leonora" No. 3.....Beethoven.

The feasts of Symphony and Overture, played by that complete and splendid orchestra, were not the least interesting events of the week. This time the Overtures and Symphonies were just those with which the Symphony Concerts of the Harvard Musical Association first made their mark three years ago. They have all been often heard in Boston, but never before with such a rich sonority, and altogether so effectively. The band already worked together admirably under Mr. ZERRAHN'S inspiring and firm conductorship. In some points, to be sure, that model Symphony of Mozart, so subtly interwoven are its parts throughout, might have gained by more rehearsal, the opportunities for which are few in such a week. That all went so well shows of what good musicians, and how experienced in classical music, that orchestra was composed. The home nucleus here had become so much better assimilated and blended by three years of really artistic concerts, that when the best orchestral players from New York and Philadelphia came to supplement them, they played all together as if they had always been accustomed to it.

Miss PHILLIPS sang that very simple, but very noble and pathetic air from one of Handel's operas, in her best voice and manner. She is evidently partial to the song, and indeed it suits her well. A repetition was inevitable.

And now we come to a pleasant topic, the Boston debut of the young German pianist, pupil of Liszt's son-in-law, Von Bülow, Miss ALIDE TOPP. The first sight of her was the signal for spontaneous and lively greeting; youth and grace and beauty, the glow of artistic enthusiasm blended with the blush of modesty, won quick sympathy. Her performance of Schumann's extremely difficult, as well as finely poetic and original Concerto was truly wonderful. The touch was perfectly crisp and clear, the full chords



rang out instantaneous in all their breadth and fullness; the distribution of accent, the phrasing, the light and shade, were all that could be desired; there was delicacy where that was needed, there was force to a wonderful degree for those slender arms, force which the strongest passages could not exhaust. There was the charm of *abandon*, too, losing herself completely in her music. The way in which she watched the conductor, watched the orchestra, feeling the composition as a whole, then throwing her head freely back, and swaying slightly back and forward, appeared to give herself to the full stream of tone and revel in it, showed how her heart was in her work; any suspicion of affectation was disarmed at the outset. All the best qualities of the modern *technique* were there in a degree we have hardly seen surpassed. The interpretation of the work, too, was intelligent and highly satisfactory. There might perhaps be some question about the occasional slower *tempi*, whether the contrasts were not somewhat overdone; but on the whole the characteristic power and beauty of the Schumann Concerto was brought clearly home to every listener. The last movement, especially the latter half of it, was given with amazing power and brilliancy, one unflagging gradual *crescendo* to the end.

We have heard it said that her interpretation lacked the charm of sentiment. We did not miss that, and it is commonly essential to our enjoyment of any music. But we have also seen the objection coupled with a comparison,—an unfortunate one for its purpose: "Her rendering of the Schumann Concerto lacks as yet the sentiment which such an artist as Mr. Mills breathes into it." We felt the sentiment in Mr. Mills, as little as we missed it in Miss Topp. But it is hardly safe to undertake to gauge the poetry and feeling of a player, almost perfect in all else, until you have heard him more than once and know him in more ways than one. Youth, and influences of education and example, too, must be considered. One thing is certain: Schumann's Concerto (to our experience) was not emptied of its soul and poetry that afternoon.

The audience were electrified. After no end of fine piano playing, here was a real fresh "sensation" still reserved for them. Such enthusiastic demonstrations we have not witnessed for a long time; persistently recalled, the young artist appeared at the side door repeatedly, in trembling acknowledgment; but there was no help for it, play again she must; four giants were already covering "the Chickering" with coarse ceremonies, to huddle it away, when this bright creature stood among them, and it had to come to life again and give out music. She played the first of Liszt's "Rhapsodies Hongroises," a strangely brilliant and fantastical affair, beginning much like Chopin in his grander, deeper mood, but shifting through all sorts of moods and fancies, and displaying every phase of Lisztian virtuosity. This, as well as the Concerto, she played entirely from memory, and both must rank among the most perfect instances of that pianism which knows no difficulties, while it is at the same time intelligent and tasteful and glowing with enthusiasm, that have yet been witnessed here. We have no disposition to compare her, as Von Bülow has done, with Mme. Schumann, Clossa, and others of like standing; the time for comparison with full-grown artist characters is not yet come for one so young. Her young imagination now is naturally preoccupied with Liszt and the new school of prophets of which the Abbate is the head; for among these she has been educated, and, whatever we may think of their tendency, must have found much to quicken her enthusiasm, to which the sentiment of gratitude has also lent its sanction. But it is a hopeful sign of her artistic future, that she appreciates and makes her own so truly classical a work as Schumann's Concerto, while, we are told, she is equally ready to play from memory all the

Beethoven Concertos, and those by Mendelssohn and others. The Liszt-Bülow influence can do no harm, rather much good, if at the same time her heart continue open to these others.

#### THURSDAY.—SECOND AFTERNOON CONCERT.

Overture: "Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt," (Beethoven)  
at Sea; a breeze; happy voyage; coming into port).  
Mendelssohn.  
Song, "Ah, Perfidio".....Beethoven.  
Mme. Parepa-Rosa.  
Concerto for the Violin, G major.....Spohr.  
Carl Rosa.  
Symphony, C major.....Schubert.

Mendelssohn's graphic Overture, one of the happiest of "tone-paintings" in the true subjective and suggestive sense, and Schubert's gloriously great Symphony, of the "heavenly length,"—his *ninth* and last, which he never himself heard,—have both been performed repeatedly, and well, in the Harvard concerts. Of course to hear them through the medium of this grander orchestra was a satisfaction like to that of making out a face too far off (such as one loves to study) through a mighty lens. The Symphony was magnificently played; how warmly, with sweet, rich, manly heart tones, the 'cellos pleaded in the Andante! how the double-basses thundered in the rush and whirl of the Finale!

Beethoven's highly dramatic and, for him, Italian Scena was a good selection for Mme. ROSA; the best resources of her voice and art were brought in play to advantage and made a great impression. Mr. CARL ROSA's violin playing was of the best we ever heard from him. The tone, if not so large, was less forced, the style more smooth and even and subdued, than that into which too much miscellaneous concert life had for a time betrayed him. Indeed the tone and sentiment of the whole performance seemed to us more artistic and serene, more from within and less disturbed by outer excitements, than before. The beautiful Adagio was played with a fine feeling, and without exaggeration. He held his audience in close attention and was heartily applauded.

It yet remains to chronicle a grand performance of "St. Paul," another of Beethoven's "Choral Symphony," about which our conviction heartily confirms the general report, that it was the very climax and high noon of the Festival, the first completely successful rendering of the Ninth Symphony in this country; a fourth Orchestral Concert, including the first taste of Mendelssohn's "Reformation Symphony;" and finally, the ever popular old Oratorios, from which the Handel and Haydn Society derived its name, the "Creation" and "Messiah." Were not East Wind our enemy, we might have come more shortly at all this before.

MR. DRESEL'S PIANO READINGS. Thus far we have found no room to conclude our record of those choice hours with so many great composers. With such an interpreter, they talked not in a foreign, yet in an unworldly, tongue to us. The last two "Readings" (4th and 5th) occurred on the last Thursdays of April. Here is the programme of April 23.

Prelude and Fugue.....Bach.  
Sonata.....Beethoven.  
Notturmo.....Chopin.  
Mazurkas....." "  
Polonaise....." "  
Ländler.....Schubert.  
Valse Caprice after Valse by Schubert.....Liszt.  
Notturmo.....Chopin.  
Scherzo....." "

The Sonata was the romantic one in D minor, op. 31, which a remark of Beethoven's has associated with Shakespeare's "Tempest," and when you read the one or hear the other you do seem breathing the same atmosphere, and Prospero's wand is over you. It was exquisitely rendered, especially the airy Allegretto, which is as light and free as Ariel.—For his last concert Mr. Dresel had for the first time a day not black or stormy, and the hall was full:

"Phantasiestücke".....Jul. Schaeffer.  
Sonata, A flat, op. 110.....Beethoven.  
Andante.....Mozart.  
Impromptu.....Chopin.  
Scherzo from the "Reformation Symphony".....Mendelssohn.

Etude.....Chopin.  
Valse....." "  
Berceuse....." "  
Scherzo....." "

Those little fancy pieces by Schaeffer are as original, imaginative and charming as any piano-forte things produced since Schumann, and it was a real pleasure to hear them again. The Beethoven Sonata (of the last period), with all its changeable moods and tempi, its chase of fleeting heavenly visions, its fitful, deep soliloquizing, and touching passages of sorrowful *cantabile*, and finally its flying fugue (once relapsing into the sad song), was indeed a revelation from the inner life. The Mozart Andante was arranged, and very faithfully, from the G-minor Symphony. The bright Scherzo from the Reformation Symphony, the happiest thing in it, it was a happy thought in Mr. Dresel to transcribe and give us for a foretaste.—But we must end, sorry to have to deal so briefly with a series of the choicest musical occasions of the past season.

During the present week there have occurred two most interesting concerts of the pupils of the Perkins Institution for the Blind, and the annual Musical Exhibition of the Public Schools, close upon the heels of the great Festival, and taking us by surprise. Both topics are too important to be dispatched in a few lines, and therefore we reserve them.

By the next number, too, we may hope to have gathered some report of Mr. Harrison's Great Musical Festival, now in progress in New York, for which a very extensive bill of fare is offered.

WASHINGTON, MAY 4.—In the old House of Representatives are now on exhibition all the medals and diplomas awarded to American Contributors at the Paris Exposition of 1867. The diplomas, handsomely framed, are displayed on stands that more than line the walls of that noble hall, while the medals, of gold, silver and bronze, are arranged in show cases in the centre. Conspicuous among these hundreds of diplomas and medals are four little decorations, of insignificant value in themselves considered, looking much like the army corps badges worn so proudly by the heroes of our war; but of great price in the eyes of a Frenchman from the inspiring memories of the great Napoleon, the founder of the Legion of Honor. The official certificates accompanying these crosses attest that they are awarded by the decree of the Emperor to the persons named. One of the four bears the name of "C. F. Chickering, of Boston," and this would seem to settle the vexed question of the pianos. The gold medals are alike to the smallest detail, save the name of the recipient. Mr. Chickering, we all know, is a gentleman of estimable character and standing, and a good citizen, but it was not for that that the Emperor decorated him, but because he is a *piano maker* and the best of them all, and in this manner he thinks best to distinguish him above all competitors. The greater honor conferred on these four exhibitors is obvious to the meanest capacity, and the distinction intended cannot be doubted or denied. W.

WASHINGTON, MAY 11.—The German opera troupe has been followed here by Mr. Bateman's French company, which by the completeness of all its appointments and perfection of all its performances, gives an example to be heeded by the German and Italian companies; for no opera company for many years has put its operas on the stage so carefully and completely in all details as this French troupe. The orchestra is excellent, the chorus singers of fresh, young voices, the ladies of no small personal attractions, and all of them punctiliously attentive to everything required by their role. The costumes are rich and picturesque, the scenery appropriate, and even the minor details of stage furniture carefully attended to, as we have not seen it done since the memorable days of the old Havana Company. I speak now, in reference to the performance of *La Belle Helene*, which followed *La Grande Duchesse*; this latter being familiar to you and the former not yet sung in Boston. It is greatly superior to the *Duchesse* as a musical work. Indeed anything more sparkling, fresh, and thoroughly enjoyable I have seldom heard. It reminds me often of the joyous works of Mozart, and the *Zauberflöte* was constantly recalled to me as the only parallel in the several occasions that I heard it. I confess to having been not a little prejudiced against the *Duchesse* by the idiotic advertisements of the management, which called upon the world to admire its eighth wonder,

while I went to hear this without having heard or read a word about it. The story is a most felicitous burlesque of the old story of Helen and Paris. Agamemnon, Orestes, the two Ajaxes, Achilles, Chalcas, and the poor king Menelaus figure most amusingly upon the scene. The anachronisms are exceedingly amusing and go just to the verge of absurdity without going too far, just hinting at a thing, without the broad coarseness which characterizes most burlesques. The music is delightful from beginning to end. The orchestration is rich in harmony, with many novel and charming combinations of instruments in some of the accompaniments. The melodies are very striking and fascinating, having less of the dance music character than those of the *Duchesse*, and one or two of the more serious passages were beautiful. Mlle. Tostée seems to have made the part of *La Belle Helene* her own, and it is difficult to imagine a fitter representative of the character. Setting aside one or two defects, she is in person singularly adapted to represent the Greek Queen. Her remarkable grace and abandon, aided by the most picturesque and beautiful costume, enabled her to give a most charming representation, and she has been overwhelmed with applause; double and triple encores nightly rewarding her inimitable singing of the song "*Un mari sage*," which no singer that I remember could give with such charming, irresistible abandon without passing the line of good taste which she never transcends. It is funny beyond description, and every hand joins in the plaudits that this sparkling little song always elicits. *Fritz*, of the *Duchesse*, becomes the *Paris* of this play, and *Prince Paul* becomes the unfortunate *Menelaus*. Every part is most capitally delineated, and it is hard to say which of them all is the best rendered.

In this respect this opera is more completely represented than any that I have ever seen, and there is none ever performed in this country of late years that is not entirely familiar to me, so that I say this seriously and in good faith, meaning what I say. I am sure that this conscientious and minute fidelity to the smaller details of the performance will receive the unqualified approval of Boston audiences, which will listen with delight to the charming music of this opera. It would be indeed a feast to hear some of the really great operas so given, but as yet the perfection of performance of this company has not been approached by any German or Italian company that ever sang in this country, without exception.

From here, as I understand, Mr. Bateman's Company goes to Baltimore and Philadelphia, and thence to Boston, where I am confident that this new opera will draw admiring crowds for weeks. w.

[NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—We almost suspect our friend of quizzing in the above. Such wholesale admiration of Offenbach's most empty, commonplace and heartless music, such likening of his systematic prostitution of Art to the fine frolic inspirations of Mozart in his lighter mood, such delight in an actress so coarse and utterly without refinement as Mme. Tostée, and such praise of singing no better than one may hear any night in the open air *Cafés Chantans* of the Champs Elysées,—on the part of one with whom we for the most part musically sympathize—must be ironical, or else our friend's lot, musically, has indeed fallen in most barren places, that even Offenbach can comfort him. Of course we can give the Bateman troupe credit for good acting, *mise en scène*, &c., worthy of a better cause; but that Boston is to be congratulated, musically or morally, on this importation from the lowest theatres of Paris (and it now threatens us through two channels, the French troupe from New Orleans, as well as Bateman's) is something which we cannot be expected to admit after our frank statement of impressions from the *Duchesse* several months ago. So, to show at least that there are two sides to the question, after printing the letter from Washington, we will offset it with an article on the same subject from the Philadelphia Bulletin.]

PHILADELPHIA, MAY 15.—Offenbach's comic opera *La Belle Helene*, after much preliminary puffing, was produced last night at the Academy of Music by Bateman's French Opera Company. So far as a brilliant audience, elegant stage effects, fair acting and a moderate display of enthusiasm contribute to success, the performance was successful. So far as good music, artistic singing, genuine humor and a proper regard for decency constitute success, it was a wretched failure.

The text of the *Grand Duchesse* is fresh, original, witty and amusing; *La Belle Helene* does not contain a witty passage, and has neither originality nor an excellent use of ancient material. Travesties of Grecian mythology are as old as the belief in Saturn, and not an age has passed since the ruin of that ancient faith, in which some humorist has not made the jolly old gods and goddesses of Greece and Rome the subject of banter and parody. Messrs. Meilhac and Halévy desired to write something funny upon which Offenbach could exercise his talent. Their selection of a purely classical subject does not argue anything for their inventive talent. It simply proves that they were stranded upon the shoal which catches all wits who float in shallow waters; and they only sang through a shell that has for ages been set for the same tune.

There is something intrinsically absurd in a conception of the mighty Agamemnon with a cigar in his mouth; of King Menelaus coming in upon the accommodation train with his hat-box and umbrella; of Ajax guessing a conundrum; of Orestes securing reserved seats for the sacrifice; of Achilles bathing in modern costume in the surf; of a soothsayer making a collection of stamps for his album. This is funny, because it contains that essential element of all humor, utter incongruity. But what if we become so familiar with utterly incongruous things that they lose their peculiar distinction and consequently their humor? All this has been done before; the association of very ancient men and women with modern ideas, customs and things, is robbed of nearly all its amazing and startling characteristics by the frequency with which it is attempted. The incongruity has lost its savor. We could not be induced to laugh now at the spectacle of Julius Caesar in a high hat; or of Hercules engaging in a prize-fight with bottle and sponge. And this second-hand humor is the only kind that is contained in the libretto of *La Belle Helene*. The text is a burlesque upon the story of the flight of Helen with Paris in consequence of the award of Venus, giving him the most beautiful woman in the world. Mlle. Tostée in this latter character constituted the most consummate parody in the whole entertainment.

The acting was very good, but it was not in any degree better than that which can be seen at any first rate minstrel entertainment; and it was precisely the same in kind. The Ajax First of last night would make a successful "end man," and Agamemnon would rise to eminence as a "conversationalist." The minstrel companies produce scores of burlesques yearly that are more original, and infinitely more amusing than this one is; and their music is better. *La Belle Helene* does not contain an air, or a chorus, or a concerted piece of any kind, that is as sweet, or as beautiful as the vast multitude of songs that negro minstrelsy has given to the world. Not one of the melodies sung last night was worthy of an encore. Indeed, but one hearty encore was given, and that was awarded to Mlle. Tostée, who was compelled to sing a little aria in the second act three times over. And what was it that excited the enthusiasm of a Philadelphia audience to such a degree that the actress was vehemently applauded; that masses of flowers were showered upon her, and that she was required to repeat? It was not the music, for that is beneath contempt. It was that Mlle. Tostée, dressed as *La Belle Helene* would have blushed to have been attired, indulged in a queer trick of lifting her gaiter from the stage and twisting it oddly over her left leg. It was not funny, it was vulgar and coarse. It had a slangy, Jakey air about it, which, with a peculiar movement of her body—something between a shake and a shrug—seemed to afford intense amusement to the male portion of the audience. The fact is discreditable alike to the person who executed the movement and to those who applauded it.

Mlle. Tostée succeeds in this country simply because she does coarse things in a rakish way, to which, happily, we are not accustomed. It is not her talent that wins popularity for her; it is the boldness with which she transplants the tricks of the Concert Saloon to the stage of the Academies. This was the only really objectionable thing in the whole performance, if we except the occasional double entendres in the text of the opera. But the translator is a careful man, and he has purified the English version so that it does not in any great measure offend Anglo Saxon taste.

## Special Notices.

### DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE LATEST MUSIC.

Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

#### Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

- Farewell, Aristeus. 2. G to g. "Orpheus." 30  
Neath the broad shade. 2. G major and minor to g. "Orpheus." 35  
O, nothing can exceed my woe. 2. G to e. " 30  
To captivate the prond Alemena. 3. G to f sharp. "Orpheus." 30  
Come, it is honor. 3. E flat to F. Duet. " 60  
Since love has set my heart. 3. F to a. " 30  
Six pretty airs from "Orpheus," which is a clever mythological burlesque. The second is a charming pastoral, and the third one of Diana's spirited hunting songs. The petty spite of the lesser gods and goddesses is well taken off in the fourth, and the fifth is a comical duet between the personification of Public Opinion and Orpheus, who unwillingly descends to the Shades for his wife, "Since love" and "Aristeus," are also pretty airs.

Awake, love, awake. Serenade for 1 or 4 voices. White. 80

It is a point of the first importance, in a serenade for the serenades to be awake, and especially desirable when such fine music is to succeed the arousing.

- King Cash. Comic. 2. F to f. Howard Paul. 30  
I've got a new beau. 2. A to e. " 30  
Charming gay Quadroon. 2. C to g. Newcomb. 30  
On the beach at Newport. 3. A to f sharp. Stanfield 30  
Four pleasing comic songs, of which the first has most substance, and the others are very pretty trifles to sing.

#### Instrumental.

- Sabre Song. Transcription. 4. D. B. Richards. 40  
Dites Lui. " 3. E. " 40  
Nymphs of the Fountain. Caprice. F sharp and G flat. 4. B. Richards. 30  
Three beauties by Richards, who wears well as a composer. Do not be frightened at the key of the last, as the music fits very easily to the fingers.  
Feu-follet. (Fire-fly). 5. G flat. Prudent. 70  
Quite beautiful, in a rich, warbling, melodious style, and quite original. Good exhibition piece.  
Golden Wedding Waltz. 2. C and G. Turner. 30  
Something in the style of the "Fairy Wedding Waltz."  
Corn-flower Waltz. 4 hands. 3. G. Russell. 30  
Well-known and a great favorite.  
Postillion. Variations. 4 hands. 3. D.  
Brilliant, and good practice.  
Forget-me-not Waltzes. 3. F. Standhaft. 75  
Very mellow and sweet music.  
Deuxieme Nocturne. 4. D flat. Leyback.  
A fine melody, skillfully interspersed with runs, trills, and arpeggios.  
Rose-bud Nocturne. 3. E flat. Turner. 30  
Pond Lilies. Schottische. 2. B flat. Fernald. 30  
Brilliant.

#### Books.

- CARMINA COLLEGENSIA. A complete collection of the Songs of American Colleges. Cl. \$2.25  
By H. R. Waite Full gilt, 3.00  
Contains about 350 wide awake College Songs, nearly all accompanied with music, and is the most complete collection extant. A splendid book, and will circulate far outside the walls of Universities. Twenty-one colleges contribute to its contents.

ABBREVIATIONS. Degrees of difficulty are marked from 1 to 7. The key is marked with a capital letter, as C, B flat, &c. A small Roman letter marks the highest note, if on the staff, an italic letter the highest note, if above the staff.

MUSIC BY MAIL.—Music is sent by mail, the expense being two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, (about one cent for an ordinary piece of music). Persons at a distance will find the conveyance a saving of time and expense in obtaining supplies. Books can also be sent at double these rates.



